

POLITICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

233

is plunged straight into a world* of duels, debts and amorous intrigues. There are no blushes on the cheeks of this ecclesiastical Don Juan. While still a young man he found himself Coadjutor, or, as we should say, Suffragan of the Archbishop of Paris, a promotion which raised a troublesome problem of casuistry. " I found the Archbishopric degraded by rny uncle, and I was not blind to the insurmountable difficulties in myself. I was not unaware that a certain moral standard is expected from a bishop, and that the scandalous life of my uncle made it more indispensable for me than for others. *At the same time I felt myself incapable of attaining it. So I decided to do evil deliberately—the worst offence before God and the wisest course before men. ... I resolved to fulfil scrupulously all the duties of my profession, and to be as zealous for the welfare of others as I would be wicked for myself/* He became an Archbishop in spite of himself, but he asked and obtained the Cardinal's hat. One of his many *liaisons* was particularly stormy, he seizing the lady by the throat, she hurling a chandelier at his head. Some monks were employed to make copies of the Memoirs, and when they protested at certain passages the author blandly replied: "A Uea! Allez! J'ai fait cela, ainsi point de honte de le dire." Despite this serene effrontery, several pages have been torn out of the original manuscript in the Bibliothfque Nationale, nobody knows by whom.

It is an entertainment to wander through his picture gallery. ** Richelieu," he declares in a pungent phrase, " leaned to the good whenever his interests did not draw him towards evil." The great Cardinal, we may remark in passing, had observed prophetically of the young man: VoilA un dangereux esprit |

Mazarin is painted with more malice and
elaboration than any
of the principal actors, for the two slippery
Italians fought
each other for power during the long confusion
of the Fronde.
" On ne peut esperer du repos & ou cet
homme sera,"
decided the Cardinal, and de Retz was filled
with contempt-
uous detestation of his foe. He set up to be a
second Richelieu, but he had nothing of him except the
impudence of
imitation* He mocked at religion. He promised
everything
because he had no wish to fulfil his promises. He
had a brain
but no soul. Un vilain cceur! Richelieu treated
France like
a quack with violent remedies, which wore out
the body.
Mazarin, like an inexperienced doctor, enfeebled
the country
with bleedings. France fell into lethargy, and he
mistook this